



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Chris Jacobs

## Jacobs, UB School of Pharmacy Partner To Distribute Drug Deactivation Systems

SENATOR JACOBS February 6, 2019

| ISSUE: **COMBAT HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION, HEROIN AND OPIOID TASK FORCE**



(Buffalo, NY) – In an effort to reduce the availability of unused prescription drugs to people struggling with addiction, New York State Senator Chris Jacobs (60th SD) announced today that his office is partnering with the University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (SPPS) to distribute thousands of Deterra Drug Deactivation Systems throughout Western New York.

Jacobs' announcement comes at a time when opioid overdoses are now responsible for more deaths in the United States than automobile accidents.

"Prescription drug abuse is a major contributor to the heroin and opioid crisis that continues to plague our community, state and nation," said Jacobs, who for the last two years Co-Chaired the Senate's Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction. "By providing a safe and environmentally friendly way for people to dispose of their unused medications, we are taking a significant amount of dangerous drugs out of circulation that might otherwise have been misused after falling into the wrong hands."

Joining Senator Jacobs at the announcement was Dr. James M. O'Donnell, Dean at the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Karl D. Fiebelkorn, Senior Associate Dean for Student, Professional and Community Affairs. The school originally secured 20,000 of the drug deactivation systems in conjunction with their student-led safe drug disposal programs.

Fiebelkorn stated, "It is vitally important we continue to remove dangerous unused or expired opioids that families might have in their household. We need to protect the elderly from adverse incidents, accidental poisoning of young children and overdoses from inquisitive adolescents."

"The significant work being undertaken by Professor Fiebelkorn and our students to combat the opioid crisis is critical to the health and safety of our community," said Dean O'Donnell. "We look forward to working with Senator Jacobs and other community leaders to help educate patients about this important outreach effort."

United Kingdom-based Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals paid for the easy-to-use drug deactivation systems as an extension of their commitment to aid in the fight against opioid

abuse. Rather than flushing medications down a toilet where they can pollute our waterways or leaving them in a medicine cabinet, unused pills, patches or liquid medications can be placed into the pouch along with warm water. After 30 seconds, the medications are deactivated. The pouches can then be disposed of in normal trash removal, making them safer for landfills as well as directly removing unwanted pharmaceuticals from potential misuse or abuse.

In addition to mailing the pouches to any resident who requests them from his office, Jacobs said pouches will also be available at his “Senator on Your Street” community office hours that are held monthly in each town of his 60<sup>th</sup> Senate District. Drug deactivation systems will also be available at two free Narcan training events the Senator is sponsoring on Tuesday, February 19, 2019 at the North Buffalo Community Center and Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at the Brighton Volunteer Fire Company #5 in the Town of Tonawanda. They will also be available at community events like the Senior Scam Prevention Seminars that Jacobs sponsors throughout the area.

“I want to commend the University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, their students and administrators for their leadership and the active role they are playing in combatting the opioid crisis in our community,” Jacobs said. “I look forward to partnering with them to save lives in our community while protecting our environment,” the Senator concluded.